

**COUNCIL ASSEMBLY**

**(ORDINARY MEETING)**

**28 NOVEMBER 2018**

**LATE QUESTION**

**1. QUESTION TO THE LEADER FROM COUNCILLOR ANOOD AL-SAMERAI**

Has the leader seen the 10 foot high wall around almost half of Southwark Park and does he think there has been anything to be learned about the process and principle of using this public space for private profit?

**RESPONSE**

The deputy leader of the council, Councillor Rebecca Lury, has been leading on this issue including speaking with residents, local groups and ward councillors. She has visited the site and is aware of concerns of some local councillors and some local residents about this.

Southwark Council spends nearly £230,000 each year on delivering and supporting events such as the annual firework display, Bermondsey Carnival, and Dulwich Christmas Cracker to name a few. We also spend approximately £6.5m each year running and maintaining our parks, let alone the millions of pounds of capital investment that has transformed parks such as Southwark Park, Burgess Park and Peckham Rye in recent years.

For our larger parks, we have looked to bring in external commercial events that generate additional income to help maintain services and keep parks to a high standard for all to enjoy. Events such as Alice in Winterland not only provide much needed income, but also offer a memorable event for local families and residents.

Following considerable engagement as well as planning and licensing committee, changes were made to the original proposal, the event closes an hour earlier on week nights and changes were made to access and egress and gate management.

In addition the organisers have offered the following; a free community day on Saturday for 2,000 invited local stakeholders and community members, all residents are able to purchase tickets with a 25% discount, and a letter drop went to 7,000 local households offering a 40% discount.

Local schools have been involved and children's voices can be heard narrating the story and local performers are participating using a community stage.

While the fencing around the event is high it is there to provide protection for the event and ensure that access to it is properly controlled.

There are always lessons to be learned and as is normal practice when we hold events there will be post event evaluation where lessons learned will be taken forward to planning for such events in future.